Rubber Board received only a few complaints against delay in payment of subsidy.

Major Commercial Banks operating in rubber growing areas already provide loans for replanting/newplanting to growers, which are refinanced by NABARD.

Labour Attaches in Indian Embassies in Gulf Countries

827. SHRI D. B. CHANDRA GOWDA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to post labour Attaches in Indian Embassies in Gulf countries to deal with the problems of the Indian migrant workers; and

(b) if so, whether any final decision has been taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. It is under consideration.

Amendment of Provident Fund Act

828. SHRIMATI KRISHNA KAUL: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to amend the Provident Fund Act to provide for increase in penalty for default;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) by when the proposed amendment is likely to be effected?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Details are being worked out.

(c) Efforts are being made to bring forward a suitable amending Bill, as early as possible.

Scheme for Organising Beedi Workers into Cooperatives

829. SHRIMATI RATAN KUMARI: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether the honorary Adviser appointed to help in formulating a scheme for organising beedi workers into cooperatives has since submitted his report;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) what action has been taken by Government thereon;

(d) whether it is a fact that his Ministry has received a project entitled 'Promotion of Industrial Cooperatives Among Beedi Workers' from the ILO; and

(e) if so, what are the details thereof and what action Government have taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The honorary Adviser has *inter-alia* recommended organisation of beedi workers into co-operatives with a minimum strength of 5000 workers. The scheme envisages financial assistance to co-operative societies. Since formation of co-operative societies is primarily the concern of the State Governments, the outline of the project report prepared by the honorary Adviser was sent to the important beedi manufacturing States for suitable action. It is learnt that the Gujarat Government have helped in the formation of some co-operative societies of beedi workers.

(d) No, Sir. A draft project idea has been received from the I.L.O.

(e) Does not arise.